



# Influenza Outbreak Guidelines for Long-Term Care Facilities

## Michigan Department of Community Health



### I. Definition of an Influenza Outbreak in Long-Term Care (LTC) Settings:\*

1. A sudden increase of acute febrile respiratory illness (AFRI) cases over the normal background rate

OR

2. When **any** resident tests positive for influenza. One case of confirmed influenza by any testing method in a long-term care facility resident is an outbreak.

### II. Outbreak Control Measures for LTC Settings:\*

Should be promptly implemented in the event of any of the following:

1. **Definition of an Outbreak (Section I above) is met.** This includes an influenza diagnosis in at least one resident or an increase in AFRI cases above background rates.

OR

2. **Identification of a Cluster of AFRI cases:** Three or more cases of acute febrile respiratory illness (AFRI) occurring within 48 to 72 hours, in residents who are in close proximity to each other (e.g., in the same area of the facility).

### III. Action Steps: *(Undertaken by the LTC facility with LHD coordination as needed)*

1. The LTC facility should contact their local health department (LHD).
2. The local health department must notify MDCH of an influenza outbreak or apparent AFRI cluster, either by phone (at 517-335-8165) or through MDSS or other reporting form.
3. LHDs have the option of entering the information into MDSS, using their choice of the individual Influenza form for each case or the Unusual Outbreak form, collecting relevant information as they see fit.

4. Develop a plan for influenza testing (with LHD coordination as needed).

*If needed, order MDCH testing kits by calling (517) 335-9867 or faxing the requisition form ([http://www.michigan.gov/documents/dch-0568\\_7396\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/dch-0568_7396_7.pdf)) to (517) 335-9039.*

5. Institute droplet precautions as appropriate, including the use of face masks if direct contact within 3 feet of patient occurs. See web links below.

\*Definitions are from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) document *Infection Control Measures for Preventing and Controlling Influenza Transmission in Long-Term Care Facilities*, which is located at the following website: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/infectioncontrol/longtermcare.htm>

6. Post handwashing signs. Emphasize respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette at all times. See web links below.
7. Vaccinate all unvaccinated residents/patients and staff with the current seasonal influenza vaccine unless medically contraindicated.
8. Consult with the facility Medical Director regarding offering of antiviral prophylaxis to exposed non-ill patients and unvaccinated staff.
9. Cohort and/or isolate ill residents as feasible.
10. Restrict ill staff from patient care. Restrict movement of other staff between wards.
11. Implement the facility policy for restriction of ill visitors. Consider implementing the restriction of all visitors. Post visitor signs.
12. Implement the facility policy for limiting or deferring new admissions.

Facilities are encouraged to educate staff on signs and symptoms of flu, when to consider testing, the need for ongoing respiratory hygiene, and control measures that must be rapidly initiated in an outbreak. Ideally, this education takes place before an outbreak and is continually updated. See websites below and <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/>.

#### **IV. Essential Reference Websites**

##### **Infection Control Measures for Preventing & Controlling Influenza Transmission in Long-Term Care Facilities**

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/infectioncontrol/longtermcare.htm>

##### **Using Antiviral Medications to Control Influenza Outbreaks in Institutions**

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/infectioncontrol/institutions.htm>

##### **Recommendations for Using Antiviral Agents for Seasonal Influenza (from the ACIP Recommendations on the Prevention and Control of Influenza)**

<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/rr/rr5606.pdf>

##### **Respiratory Hygiene/Cough Etiquette**

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/infectioncontrol/resphgiene.htm>

##### **Standard Precautions Excerpt from the Isolation Guideline**

[http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/gl\\_isolation\\_standard.html](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/gl_isolation_standard.html)

##### **Droplet Precautions Excerpt from the Isolation Guideline**

[http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/gl\\_isolation\\_droplet.html](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/gl_isolation_droplet.html)

For Acute Care Facilities:

##### **Infection Control Guidance for the Prevention & Control of Influenza in Acute-Care Facilities**

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/infectioncontrol/healthcarefacilities.htm>